Official Newspaper of Record for the City of Belleville
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BELLEVILLE-AREA
INDEPENDENT

Vol. 27.2 Thursday, January 14, 2021 Serving the Communities of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren FREE

Independent photo by James Otzman

At around 3 a.m. Saturday, a fire burned three homes on Carriage Lane in Rawsonville Woods mobile home park in Sumpter Township. The center home, where the fire started, was reportedly vacant, but homes on either side sustained severe damage as Sumpter fire fighters battled to save them. Jose Rivera, who lived in the mobile home on the left, above, told Channel 4 News that he was awakened by loud knocking on the door when officers came to tell him his home was on fire. He said he and his two sons got out safely and he was grateful for that and all his personal possessions could be replaced, but not their lives. On the other side, reportedly two women lived – one woman who assists her blind friend. They, too, escaped and lost everything. A gofundme page for "Devastating Fire," started by Amanda Walker, is seeking funds to help them. The cause of the fire is yet to be determined.

Belleville Police Department joins Mobile Field Force team

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

If a demonstration or protest happens in the city, the Belleville Police Department will be able to call in the Western Wayne County Mobile Field Force Team.

At Monday's regular meeting via Zoom, the Belleville City Council approved a memo of understanding with the Mobile Field Force Team.

Police Chief Dave Robinson said if his department hears of a planned demonstration he can give a Code White and 60 people in riot gear, trained in crowd control, will come.

"We don't have anything in our department for crowd control," he said. "This is harnessing the efforts of the team in time of need."

He said this team was organized 12-15 years ago by Livonia and Dearborn police departments. Now, the team is trying to establish an actual budget. He said they are working on the budget, but they are assured the cost to Belleville to join the team will not exceed $1,000 annually.

He said he will assign one interested officer and the officer will go to four trainings a year. When asked if the officer was on vacation or maternity leave when a demonstration occurred what would happen. Chief Robinson said the team would come anyway.

He said the team already has received 10 approvals of the 18 police departments involved.

Chief Robinson said the officer only has to provide a Body Dress Uniform and the usual weapons and the team provides the riot gear.

"It's an insurance policy," Chief Robinson said. "All I have to do is pick up the phone."

Councilman Ken Voigt, a retired Belleville police officer, said there was a similar experience in the past when there were demonstrations at Cracker Barrel.

"We hopefully will never have to use it," Councilman Voigt said of the team. "It's an insurance policy."

Chief Robinson said the officer trained would train others in the department. He said he received training in crowd control when he was in the Dearborn department in the early 1990s.

In other business at the hour-long meeting, the council:

• Approved an amended 2021 City Council Meeting Schedule. Planning Commissioner Mike Renaud noticed some errors and alerted the clerk, so it was updated;

• Approved an agreement for the Urban County Community Development Block Grant Program, as requested by

(continued on page 13)

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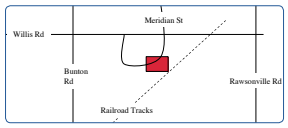

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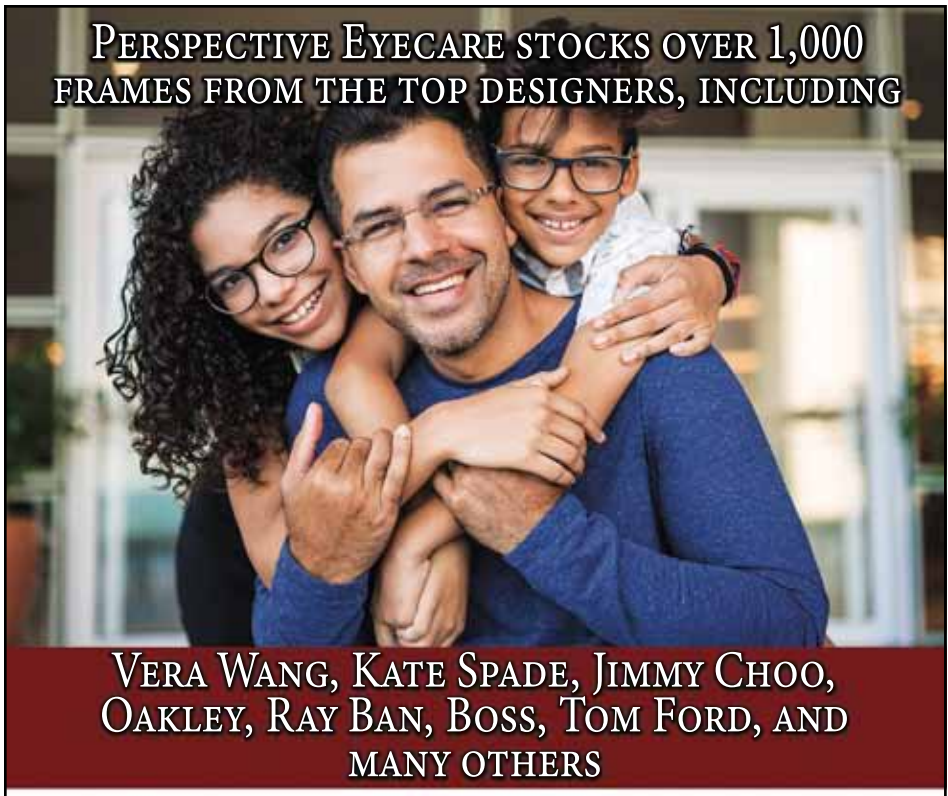

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SECOND FRONT PAGE

Court Watching:

Sumpter Twp. shooting suspect has case adjourned to Jan. 13

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Dajon Donte Lewis, 18, of Sumpter Township was present via Zoom on Jan. 6 for his probable cause conference at 34th District Court before Judge Tina Brooks Green.

Lewis

He was arraigned on Christmas Day and is charged with one count of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder, one count of assault with a dangerous weapon (felonious assault), and two counts of weapons-felony firearm on Dec. 14 in Sumpter Township.

He was being held in the Wayne County Jail on $100,000 cash or surety bond. He bonded out with the stipulation he must wear a tether and have no contact with the shooting victim or the home on Edgewood Drive where the shooting occurred.

His appointed defense attorney is Kristine Longstreet of the Neighborhood Defender Service. Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor is Jane Gillis.

Longstreet said she has received discovery from the prosecutor and she would like time to meet with her client so they can decide what to do. Judge Green adjourned the case until 10 a.m. Jan. 13 in front of Judge Lisa Martin in courtroom 4 via Zoom.

The charges brought against Lewis result from an alleged home invasion on Dec. 14 in the Rawsonville Woods mobile home community on Rawsonville Road. Sumpter police said during the incident, the defendant produced a handgun and a struggle ensued which resulted in a 22-year-old resident of the home being shot through the leg.

The defendant fled the location but was located and taken into custody in the Ypsilanti area by the Michigan State Police Fugitive Team.

Kojuan Jamel Quiles

Kojuan Jamel Quiles, 46, of Van Buren Township was present for his Zoom probable cause conference on Jan. 6 before Judge Green on charges of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder, assault with a dangerous weapon (felonious assault), and domestic violence on Dec. 26 in Van Buren Township.

At the request of the defense attorney the case was adjourned until 10:20 a.m. Jan. 27 to give time for the prosecutor to get discovery to the defense.

Bond was set at $10,000/10% with a stipulation that at release he must have no contact with the alleged victim or his home on Bog Road.

His appointed defense attorney is Kristine Longstreet of the Neighborhood Defender Service. Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor is Darrian Fortier.

Tyreek Dujuan Armes

Tyreek Dujuan Armes, 17, of Van Buren Township was present for his Zoom probable cause conference before Judge Green on Jan. 6 on one count of assaulting / resisting / obstructing a police officer on Dec. 24 in Van Buren Township.

The probable cause conference was adjourned to negotiate a plea. It now is scheduled by Zoom for 10:30 a.m., Jan. 27, in front of 34th District Court Chief Judge Brian A. Oakley.

Armes has been free on $2,000 personal bond. His appointed defense attorney is Kristine Longstreet of Neighborhood Defender Service. Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor is Jane Gillis.

David Osmond Brown

David Osmond Brown, 53, of Sumpter Township attended his Zoom probable cause conference Jan. 6 before Judge Green on a charge of operating while intoxicated – 3rd offense on June 25 in Sumpter Township.

He is free on $10,000 personal bond and his defense attorney is Philip A. Ragan, Jr.

The case was adjourned several times as the attorney worked on a plea deal and a possibility of getting into a Sobriety Court.

On Jan. 6, Ragan said he had a deal approved by the prosecutor's office and it includes pleading guilty to a misdemeanor, 18 months of probation, and Sobriety Court. Judge Green said she and her staff decide who is in the 34th District Sobriety Court and so her probation department will interview Brown to see if he qualifies.

Brown's probable cause conference was adjourned to Feb. 10.

Elizabeth Sheridanlouis Chamberlain

Elizabeth Sheridanlouis Chamberlain, 40, of Van Buren Township, was arraigned via Zoom on Jan. 5 by Judge Oakley on a charge of assault with a dangerous weapon (felonious assault) and domestic violence on Jan. 3 in Van Buren Township.

Judge Oakley set her probable cause conference for 10:10 a.m. on Jan. 13 by Zoom and put her on personal bond of $5,000, with the stipulation that she have no contact with the complainant and not return to her home on E. Huron River Drive.

He pointed out that she already is on probation from 34th District Court on domestic violence, but it's a different victim now. He said she had several cases and recalled the bench warrant on one. She also has a retail fraud case in Belleville, Judge Oakley said, along with disorderly person and others.

And, she owes the court money and she needs to start paying on her fines. She said because of COVID she has had no income since March. Judge Oakley said she will have to start paying her fines or working them off by working for nonprofit groups.

Toni Gail Clark

Toni Gail Clark of Sumpter Township was present by Zoom before Judge Green on Jan. 7 for her pre-trial on a misdemeanor charge of "false report of a misdemeanor" at 9:05 p.m., Aug. 8, at the Sumpter Township polls at the community center.

Sumpter Prosecutor Robert P. Young told Judge Green that he made an offer to Clark, which she didn't take and she since has accepted employment with the township. Clark now serves as Sumpter Township Deputy Treasurer.

Young, who is township attorney, said if the matter is not resolved by Jan. 21 he will let the court know and he may have to ask the Van Buren Township prosecutor or someone else to take over the case.

Judge Green adjourned Clark's pre-trial until 9:10 a.m., March 11, by Zoom before Judge Lisa Martin.

Clark's defense attorney is John O. Knappmann. Officer in charge of the case is Sumpter Public Safety Director/Police Chief Eric Luke who filed the charge on Sept. 29.

Belleville Clerk/Treas. Chapman gives report on her department

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

Belleville Clerk / Treasurer Verna Chapman gave a 43-minute report on her department during a special study session held via Zoom before Monday's regular council meeting.

This report was before the council's annual budget sessions were set to begin.

In preparation for the report, she said she asked department heads to tell "the good, bad, and ugly" about her department.

She said when she came to the position she set goals for herself for 30, 60, and 90 days. She said the first 30 days concentrated on the election. The second 30 days was focused on who does what, the processes they have, and having a notary.

The next 30 days was to implement the process, fine tune her process with the city manager and council, and work on a plan for a positive customer experience.

Chapman said she is the only one in the clerk's office and the treasurer's side has Plante Moran, an assessor, and two clerks, who receive payments, pay bills, and do payroll.

She said she wants to increase accountability. She said the BS&A software being used can do much more than they are using it for and can help them automate just about everything.

Chapman said she also would like to improve security for those entering the building and those inside the building, making sure everyone's accountable.

She said a lot of keys are being used in every section.

As far as the finance department goes, she doesn't want to add human resources, but she'd like to improve the training.

There is one full-time employee for water billing and she recommends training to improve the billing and customer service and make sure it is accurate on the first pass.

Chapman suggested a part-time, shared person to assist with clerical tasks and just getting the bill out the door.

"I want to train our staff as water professionals," she said.

Elections

Chapman said the next key service is elections and they need to identify space for voters. She said in the future there will be more in-person voting with the law changes. She said she would like to have a place for them to vote, around city hall. And, she would like tabulators in a future budget.

Chapman said an additional employee to support the clerk and city manager should be hired. She said now the two support each other and the city manager can't perform her real work if she is performing this clerical work.

She said this full-time employee could be developed into an election official.

Councilman Tom Fielder said Chapman was referring to voting prior to election day. He said he's seen voters sitting around tables at city hall, several at once with nothing blocking their ballots.

"We made it work. It served its purpose," Chapman said. "But there is a better way

(continued on page 11)

OPINIONS

Editorial

Local residents wait patiently for coronavirus shots

While local residents wait patiently – and impatiently – for their coronavirus vaccines, the state and county give mixed messages on when it will be available.

Cedar Woods assisted living/memory residence on the I-94 South Service Drive said the staff and residents were getting their shots on Tuesday and Wednesday.

At Monday's regular meeting of the Belleville City Council, the council was informed the city has not yet received notices on when the vaccine will be available here for the public safety officers and others.

Mayor Kerreen Conley said the shots are being given as available and people are in lines a mile long for shots.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesse Marcotte, a public safety officer in Northville Township, said he was in a line a mile long to get his shot.

We've had senior citizens calling the *Independent* to ask how to get their shots, since the information on the county website is useless in finding a location. We're pretty much clueless, as well.

Gov. Whitmer had announced the state gave vaccines to CVS and Walgreens, but those stores say they don't have it yet. St. Joseph Mercy Hospital is alerting patients that it will let them know when shots will be available. Staff is being inoculated first.

We hope county and state officials work out the kinks in their routines and get us the shots as soon as possible.

EXTRA THINGS I KNOW ...By Rosemary K. Otzman

Three charges were dropped against a 21-year-old Belleville resident in 34th District Court on Friday after her mother, an attorney, took on her case free of charge. The prosecutor had charged the daughter with driving without a license, ignoring a stop sign, and a third charge in the City of Belleville on Oct. 24. The charges were filed Dec. 9 and she had bonded out with a 10% deposit of $200 on Dec. 10.

There had been an offer to add a plea of double parking and to leave the stop sign offense which carries points on her driving record. But the defense attorney went into a breakout room (this all was happening by Zoom) with the Wayne County Assistant Prosecutor and when they came out the prosecutor dropped all the charges.

The prosecutor said the attorney was a tough bargainer and almost made her cry (she seemed to be kidding).

The daughter was very grateful to everyone and all the court officials told her she owed her mother big-time and she should do things to help her, like cleaning her toilets.

The defense attorney said she was very grateful to the court, too, and she would not ask anything about the fine and would just leave the fine to the judge. Judge Brian Oakley said the court would just keep the $200 paid for the bond.

Never saw such a cheerful case settlement.

Court records show this young lady has had other driving infractions in Van Buren Township and Belleville in the past.

That attorney mother must have a convincing story to tell of her daughter's life.

***

The Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce has announced the following events have been finalized by a steering committee for the June 25, 26, and 27 Belleville Lakefest. On Friday night there will be a boat parade, movie night at Van Buren Park, and live entertainment on High Street.

On Saturday and Sunday there will be a 5K Community Run, Dragon Boat practice and race (15-20 paddlers on each boat), Kids' Zone, food trucks, arts and crafts on Main Street, a car show, two entertainment stages and fireworks on Saturday night.

Apparently, this is not intended to replace the Strawberry Festival which usually runs Father's Day week end (June 18-20 this year) in downtown Belleville and plans, with changes, are being put together for that event, as well.

Duelling festivals? In the age of COVID-19?

***

On Monday, John Juriga of Belleville shared with us a card sent to him by a relative recently showing that as a 10-year-old boy John was one of the first to take part in the first national tests of a trial polio vaccine conducted in 1954. The card announces he has been enrolled as a "Polio Pioneer" and the card is signed by Basil O'Connor, president of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

The back of the card shows he was a student at St. Cyril School in Binghamton, Broome County, New York at the time. That was attested to by the signature of R.H. Austin of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis on June 16, 1954.

On Monday, John also wanted to know if we knew when he could get his COVID-19 shot. Don't know.

***

Linda Luke from Friends of Michigan Animals Rescue reported the following totals for adoptions in 2020: dogs, 134; cats, 156; Trap, Neuter, Return of feral cats (TNR), 166; with a total of 453.

"I am proud of these totals," Luke said. "I hope you are too."

We are. FMAR is a fine service to our community.

***

A resident of Harmony Lane in Van Buren Township called to say she objects to DTE contractors coming in and cutting up their trees. She said has only seen one tree fall on a line in her neighborhood and that was on a Ma Bell line 17 years ago.

She said it is DTE's outdated equipment that is causing the power outages. Many of her neighbors have given up and put in $8,000 generators, but she doesn't want to do that.

"It irks me no end when they come in here and hack up our trees," she said.

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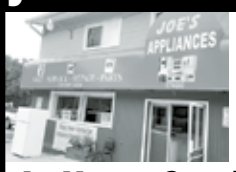
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Letters

Friends of the Library set annual meeting

To the editor:

The Friends of the Belleville Area District Library will be holding their annual membership meeting on Jan. 30 at 10 a.m. Members of the Friends of the Library and the public are invited via Zoom.

Registration for the event is required. The following link can be used: http://belleville.evanced.info/signup/EventDetails?EventId=1246, or go to Events on library website: www.belleville.lib.mi.us to register.

Minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting will be presented by the secretary. The treasurer will present the 2020 annual financial report. Committee chairs will present annual reports for book sales, online sales, membership and public relations. Reports will be e-mailed or texted to those that have pre-registered.

Elections of officers for the 2021 Board of Directors will take place. The following slate of officers for 2021 has been approved by the current board: Katerina Tyner, president; Donna Gilkey-Lavin, vice president; Rika Regentin, secretary and Manny Lavin, treasurer. Any additional nominations will be taken from the floor.

Each attending member of the Friends of the Library will have one vote. 2020 memberships have been extended until Dec. 31, 2021. New members can find membership brochures in the library or on the library website. The library phone number is 734-699-3291 for assistance.

Elaine Gutierrez
Friends of the Belleville Area District Library

Commend you for printing Christmas story

To the editor:

I am writing in regard to the Dec. 24, 2020 issue of the Belleville newspaper.

On page 4, you included the story of Christmas in Luke 2. How refreshing to read the story from the Bible.

I want to commend you for publishing the true story of Christmas.

Sincerely,
Ella Knopf, Westland

Thanks for supporting Freedom of the Press

To the editor:

In a recent publication of the *Independent*, I noted an ad submitted by Lavin Inc. and I wish to add my appreciation for you, Rosemary, and your staff for supporting and demonstrating what our United States Constitution guarantees its citizens: Freedom of the Press/Speech. Our precious freedoms are now being viciously attacked and tested.

I sincerely pray all your readers throughout our entire tri-community are paying close attention to the socialism damage that is taking place at this very moment!

Today's "cancel culture" is already at work with their evil, open and agenda-driven pursuit to alter and cancel our Democratic Constitutional Rights. As proof and positive evidence of this Socialist/Communist goal, we must listen closely to the so-called "changes" the left is heralding.

Pay close attention to what is currently taking place by "Big Tech" regarding your free speech rights via: Google, Facebook, Twitter, Apple, Amazon and Parler (with yet more to come).

AS a further point of interest, I think the Mayor and City Council's recent "passing the buck" onto the voters re: Marijuana is purely a "cop-out" and truly a disservice to our citizens and tax-payers. Q: Are you totally focused on the marijuana business as a doorway to new businesses, tax and revenue? Please - Let's look back only a short time ago: You said "NO" to a new Kroger store. Think about the revenue/taxes you threw aside then! A huge judgment mistake, in my opinion, especially now in this present pandemic era of "run-away" grocery prices.

Most assuredly, competition and revenue is what Belleville needs! I say: "NO" to the drug marijuana*; "NO" to all likewise hazardous and habit-forming drugs which will undoubtedly invade, encourage, and influence an illegal environment and element thus placing a heavy burden on our already under-staffed, under-paid "first defenders" -- our police and firemen.

Please allow me to apply my Constitutional right to question and contest the validity of the approval vote re: marijuana*.

Of the Clerk of the City of Belleville, I am interested and am requesting a reply: Please tell me -- Are all those who voted "yes" registered, of legal age, and Belleville City residents? What proofs of the above is now required in order to cast a legal vote? Are they available for publication?

Bottom Line: Today's youth, and yes, generations yet to come, need and deserve of our appointed legislators - (township, city, state, and nation: transparency, competency, honesty and most importantly -- guardianship of our Constitutional Rights.

Several years ago, I worked alongside a Therapist, Psychologist, degreed in drug therapy. He volunteered to me one day his learned and professional opinion and said his experiences had taught him: "The best and easiest way for any child to secure the drug marijuana is when a parent brings it into the home." We parents and grandparents must not allow this to happen. (According to the American Heritage Dictionary, Fifth Edition: * Marijuana: The dried flower clusters and leaves of this plant smoked or ingested as an illicit drug to induce euphoria.")

GOD BLESS AMERICA.

Thank you,
(Mrs.) Ruth E. Bleeker, Belleville

More Letters

Let's pray they will be held accountable

To the editor:

America went under siege on Jan. 6, 2021. America witnessed its worst day in modern history. Thousands of terrorists attacked the hallowed halls of our democracy trying to overthrow our elected government. The capital of the United States has not been invaded in over 200 years, but Jan. 6 ended that streak.

Democracy vs sedition, insurrection, rebellion, treason, anarchy, extremism, and an attempted coup d'état faced our nation on Jan. 6, 2021. This is not 1776 or 1812. Thankfully, democracy and our constitution prevailed as it was intended by our nation's founding fathers.

Those above actions committed by rogue senators, house representatives, and Trump enablers were appalling, and will be remembered as a dark time in American history. The U.S Constitution governs elected officials (both state and federal) in Amendment XIV- please read.

Let's hope and pray that all these rogue politicians, President Trump and his enablers will be held accountable, along with all the hundreds of so called "citizens" that invaded the Capitol of the United States. Additionally, let's not forget about all those other enablers that live and work in our very midst.

Affirmation of our democracy prevailed. Let's be thankful our constitution withstood this challenge and common sense prevailed. America has already had one civil war where hundreds of thousands of lives were lost -- she doesn't need another one. On Jan. 6, 2021, the nation lost five Americans as a result of President Trump's seditious and treasonous actions. Politically, you can't take or seize power; it must be freely given by the people. To have democracy, you must have the people.

President Trump took an oath to protect and defend America and our constitution both domestic and foreign from all enemies that may harm our nation, so help him God. He failed. Hundreds of House and Senate members who also took that oath failed America. They all have death and destruction on their hands. As a result of Trump's treasonous and seditious actions, America seems to be a country no longer of laws and the land of the free. Trump is a serial liar, racist, and Russian sympathizer. If one is to read into past history, there is a direct correlation that shows German Nazi's Leader Adolf Hitlers playbook and destructive path that Trump is mirroring.

The terror and murder of tens of millions of Jews and others by Hitler orders was, and is, unprecedented. Hitler and his minions didn't care who was hurt, just like the elected representatives and senators here in America.

According to published reports of all 50 State Governors and Secretary of State, there were minimal issues with the November vote count of 2020 for President of the United States of America where over 160 million ballots-plus were cast.

There have been over 60 court challenges both by state and federal courts; all failed. No state in the union found reason or reasons to object to the vote count because fraud existed as President Trump has stated within his lies to the American public and the world thousands of times, which in reality were all lies. There's an old saying that "if you repeat the same lie over and over, people start to believe it as the truth."

Ronald Barrington Robinson,
Elected Sumpter Township
Democrat Delegate

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Obituaries

Jo Ann Marie (Studer) Smith

JO ANN MARIE (STUDER) SMITH
(October 5, 1929 – January 8, 2021)
Jo Ann Marie (Studer) Smith went to be with Sam on Friday, January 8, 2021. Born daughter of Elsie (Funk) and Leo John Studer, on October 5, 1929, in Detroit, MI.
Jo Ann married Lloyd Leonard Smith, who went by Sam, on August 28, 1949. Jo Ann and Sam met on horseback while doing horseback square dancing. Being a mother and housewife was something never considered work by Jo Ann. As grandchildren started to arrive, her life took new meaning. Each of her grandchildren held a special place in her heart. Then great-grandchildren arrived. With each new member being born to the family, her eyes had more of a sparkle and her smiles even larger. Jo Ann passed on her love of family, honesty, and loyalty to all those that met her. One of her greatest happinesses was sharing her love for animals (especially horses) and nature with her family. She enjoyed long walks in the woods around her and Sam's property in Roscommon, MI. Baking cookies will be the memory her family will cherish the most. Some would say monster cookies, other molasses cookies, or jubilee jumbo cookies. Every family member had their favorite cookie.
Jo Ann is survived by her daughter Sandy (Tim) Clampit of Pahrump, Nevada; two sons: Larry (Sherry) Smith of Willis, MI and Lester (Karen) Smith of Pinckney, MI; 5 grandchildren: Audra (Tom) Swartout, Lloyd (Summer) Kennedy, JoLanna Smith, Stephanie (Jake) Thompson and Justin (Brittany) Smith; 5 great-grandchildren: Jordan, Samuel, Savannah, Zoey and Declan. Jo Ann was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Sam, sister Helen Bryan, brothers Leo G. "Bud" Studer and Paul Robert Studer. Jo Ann has loved and been loved by all of her many nephews and nieces. Her love that showed in her eyes and smile will be missed.
There will be a small memorial service at a later date. Interment will be in Rock Cemetery, Roscommon, MI. Arrangements were by David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville, MI.
In lieu of flowers, a donation can be made to Horses Haven, 8257 N. Latson Road, Howell, MI 48855 or at www.horseshaven.org .
www.davidcbrownfh.com

DAKOTAH RAYNE TURNER
(October 16, 1996 – January 2, 2021)
Age 24, of Ypsilanti. Ypsilanti High School class of 2014. Survived by parents Robert and Tammy Turner, grandparents Ralph and Brenda Turner, two brothers. Arrangements by David C. Brown Funeral Home, Belleville.
www.davidcbrownfh.com

SHARON THERESA LEGG
(September 25, 1955 – January 9, 2021)
Age 65, of Ypsilanti. Survived by husband Larry, 5 children, 3 grandchildren, 3 sisters. Member of Berean Baptist Church, Belleville. Arrangements by David C. Brown Funeral Home. www.davidcbrownfh.com

Michael John Mitchell, Jr.

MICHAEL JOHN MITCHELL, JR.
(November 8, 1954 – December 26, 2020)
Michael John Mitchell, Jr., died of cancer December 26, 2020 in his Westland Residential Group Home.
He is survived by his younger brother Patrick Mitchell, Patrick's ex-wife Star Mitchell, his nephew Christopher Mitchell, his niece and her husband Heather and Dave Jabtecki. Also, his great-nephews Christopher Scott Mitchell and Lucas and Logan Jabtecki.
On September 22, 1983, he was preceded in death by his mother Patricia Mitchell and on May 5, 2007 his father, attorney John Mitchell who practiced at 222 Main Street, Belleville.
Michael was a handicapped man who went through a lot of physical hardships, evolving from a birth defect. However, Michael was loved by the residents and staff of his group home. He was the life of the party. May Michael rest in peace.
Michael had his funeral and was buried in Rogers City, MI.

HAROLD A. GEPPERT
(December 6, 1929 – January 8, 2021)
Age 91, of Dexter. U.S. Air Force veteran. A branch manager for the Lathrup Village Capital Savings and Loan and a driving force in the Lions Club. Survived by 4 children, 7 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren.
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COVID-19 death total in 48111 rises to 54, positive tests at 1,944

The number of people who have died from COVID-19 in the 48111 zip code area rose by five in the last week to 54 as of Monday, Jan. 11.

The positive tests for COVID-19 in 48111 were 1,944 on Monday, Jan. 11, up from 1,840 the previous Monday, Jan. 4.

On Monday, Jan. 11, the separate numbers released by the Wayne County Health Department for the tri-community were: Van Buren Township, 1,251 positive cases, 29 deaths; City of Belleville, 354 positive cases, 19 deaths; and Sumpter Township 339 positive cases, 6 deaths.

To build a better world, start in your own community!

Hazel Lucado celebrates 100th birthday at Cedar Woods on Nov. 22

By Donna Lou Shaw
Director of Public Relations
Cedar Woods Assisted Living

Hazel Lucado celebrated her 100th birthday at Cedar Woods in Van Buren Township on Nov. 22.

Hazel has been a Resident at Cedar Woods Assisted Living & Memory Care in Van Buren Township since July 2017.

Hazel is the Bingo bandit, always has a sweet tooth, and is an artist beyond imagination. She can paint a pumpkin like Picasso!

Hazel was born in Virginia in 1920! She was the second to the youngest of 15 siblings who were blessed to survive The First Pandemic of 1918 (the Spanish Flu). Hazel's mother and father kept all 15 children safe, never letting them leave the farm, and all of 15 siblings remained free of the Spanish Virus and lived healthy, happy, and energetic lives. Once again, with the help of the dedicated team at Cedar Woods Assisted Living, our sweet Hazel has managed not to contract the coronavirus while living through her second pandemic.

In the late 1930s Hazel met her beloved husband, William Beckwith Fuqua Lucado and they married in 1940. They relocated to Michigan in the early '40s to find work. Her husband was not drafted to the Army due to an injury, however William and Hazel both went to work at the Willow Run Bomber Plant. She is a Rosie the Riveter! Hazel, although very petite, was a strong worker and bucked rivets and worked at the plant for five years, paving the way for the working women.

Salute to Hazel! Thank you, Hazel, for supporting our men at war and your service to the United States of America

Hazel left the Bomber Plant in 1945 when she became pregnant with her first daughter, Carolyn Griffin (who was present at the birthday party with her husband Earnest Griffin). Later in 1952, Hazel gave birth to another healthy girl, Lorraine Gibson (who also was present at the party at Cedar Woods with her husband John Gibson). Hazel is also the proud grandmother of three grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Hazel Lucado later became a Sunday School teacher at Calvary Baptist Church in Ypsilanti. She was one of many women in the community who started the Sunday School for the children. Bless you, Hazel, for teaching and spreading faith, love and joy to the children in Ypsilanti!

Hazel, we are blessed to have you here at Cedar Woods, and we are counting on many more years to go! The oldest female in the United States is 120 years old …. So, Hazel you have a lot of catching up to do!

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BHS Tigers roll past Cass Tech, advance to State semi-finals

By Bob Mytych
Independent Sports Writer

The Belleville High School Tiger football team cashed in two of three interceptions for touchdowns en route to a 43-16 victory over Cass Tech on Saturday at BHS.

The victory gave the Tigers (10-0) the Division 1 Regional Championship title with the next step toward a state title set for Jan. 16 against West Bloomfield (9-1), also at BHS.

The game will be televised as Game of the Week on Fox Sports Detroit and the Fox Sports Go app, beginning at 1 p.m.

The Tigers held a slim 15-10 lead at the half before Belleville's Cameron Dyson intercepted a pass and ran it back for a 25-yard score to bump the Tiger lead to 22-10. On the next possession, Cass Tech tossed a second interception into the hands of JaShawn Green before Belleville Quarterback Christian Dhue-Reid connected with Tyree Lockett inside the Red Zone to pad the lead to 29-10 in the third quarter.

Belleville's Charles Wilson intercepted a pass and returned the ball 90-plus yards for the score to make it 43-10 on the final play of the third quarter. Christian Dhue-Reid completed 13-of-20, good for 199 yards and three touchdowns. The Belleville senior set the Michigan high school record this year with 135 career touchdown passes, with 40 of them coming this season.

The Tigers have had recent success against West Bloomfield in the post season, defeating the Lakers in 2018 and rallying back with a 27-22 victory in 2019 in the state quarters. The winner advances to the finals at Ford Field Jan. 22-23. A win there would give Belleville's first state football title in school history.

Birthdays

Jan. 10 – Joe Mauricio, Verna Chapman
Jan. 15 – Jessica Grunwald
Jan. 17 – Leon Wright
Jan. 19 – Katie Bog
Jan. 20 – Ernesto Guzman
Jan. 21 – Kathy Kovach, Lisa Posegay

"I'd kill for a Nobel Peace Prize."
– Steven Wright

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Minding Your Business

with Bob Mytych

The Belleville Tiger football team came away with a 43-16 victory over Cass Tech last Saturday at BHS and will host West Bloomfield in the state semifinals this Saturday, 1 p.m. The contest will be the featured Game of the Week on Fox Sports Network and on Fox Sports Go. Once again, no fans are permitted at BHS. The weather forecast is calling for snow showers overnight Friday into Saturday with highs in the low 30s. Go Tigers!

***

Belleville Co-op affordable rental communities for seniors on Sumpter Road offers a 100% smoke-free environment, and amenities such as individual heating/cooling in the units, subsidized rent, onsite laundry, and much more. There's transportation available, too. For more information call (734) 699-8676 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 9 a.m. until noon. CSI Support & Development of Warren MI owns and operates over 60 locations in four states and is celebrating 75 years. To learn more, visit www.csi.coop and see their ad in today's paper.

***

If you're looking for a fun activity to do at home with your family during these challenging times, and you love birds and the outdoors, the folks at Audubon and Cornell Lab of Ornithology are looking for bird watchers to participate in their annual Great Backyard Bird Count on Feb. 12-15 across the country and in Canada. It's easier than ever to upload your findings, with the technology and apps available. I remember this activity years ago when I used to publish this event in the paper and the participants either had to send in their records to me or fax them. Now participants simply sign up with a free account with the Cornell Lab and utilize the apps called Merlin Bird ID, EBird, and Project Feederwatch itself. The apps have tools to help you ID birds and are super user-friendly. The activity itself next month requires you to simply record the number of bird species and birds seen in any one given time (a 15-minute session is recommended) and record and upload your findings. You can observe from the comfort of your home through a window or a few minutes outside near your feeding stations. I haven't taken part in this event in several years and am looking forward to it this year. To get started, simply search on Google the words Project Feederwatch and you're well on your way. If you'd like to take part and don't want to mess with the uploading, send your lists to me with the date, time of your session, and your counts and I will forward them on. Good luck. Email to sportzriter@aol.com .

***

Happy 26th Birthday to us, the *Independent,* as we continue to bring you this weekly source of information, stories, and interesting photos. Since 1995, our mission of serving the communities of Belleville, Sumpter, and Van Buren Township hasn't changed. Looking forward to many more. Also, here's a shoutout to Shannon Moore of Photography by Shannon, who's celebrating 30 years of her business in 2021. Congratulations! Are you celebrating a business milestone? Let us know.

***

Do you have a business item you would like to see in this column? Call Bob Mytych at (734) 699-9020. There is no cost to be in this column.

More Letters

Country needs to go back to 'for the people'

To the editor:

These events: What happened last summer and happened at the Capitol are inexcusable. The incidents that blew way out of control in the summer were fueled by a political machine and the puppeteers behind the scenes lighting the match.

Of course, the actions of those police department personnel were not suppose to happen. I have never been in those situations as a police officer so I cannot speak on the exact events. But the aftermath was truly fueled by a political agenda.

The issue is some folks think that looting and burning were justified. I just don't.

Yesterday, I think the 1,000s of people that showed up for a political protest were there because they are fed up. They are fed up with corruption in our government. They are tired of these politicians not doing the will of the people, but lining their own pockets. Trump was the only one standing between them and their political bank accounts.

So those 1,000s of people who went there to say enough is enough, the $600 slap in the face with billions going overseas, the career self-interest political machines ... enough is enough.

I truly believe the rude, unstable people that broke though and into the Capitol were part of that same spark of this past summer.

I truly believe this event was made to intimidate the senators that were not going to ratify the vote until a comprehensive bipartisan independent investigation into this past election happened. Now, that will never happen and the rich will keep getting richer.

I do not justify any these events. But I am 1,000% sure they were both politically made and with the puppeteers behind the scenes. We need term limits and true checks and balances put into place. We need the government to work for the people not their bank account.

I love our country and YOU! I sincerely hope this great country goes back to "for the people" soon.

Jeff Kotlarek
Romulus

"If we lose freedom here, there is no place to escape to. This is the last stand on Earth."
– Ronald Reagan

"There is a cult of ignorance in the United States, and there has always been. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that 'my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge.'"
– Isaac Asimov

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Belleville report

(continued from page 3)

to do it." She said there are lightweight, portable voting booths that can be used, if they have the space – somewhere to set them up.

Councilman Fielder said they had a blind person come into the polls at the last election and, "We were caught a little short." He said they used a special machine and they made it work, but more training is needed.

FOIA

In another area, Chapman said there is software to help trail Freedom of Information Act requests to make sure they are answered in the time allotted. She said she had identified cloud-based software that allows other people who want that information to get it from the cloud. Mayor Conley asked how many FOIAs they get and Chapman said a couple a month, but it fluctuates quite a bit.

Marijuana Industry

Chapman then got to the new marijuana industry in the city and noted the operating structure is not there. She said they have to develop how they handle it on an ongoing basis. The industry is projected to make a lot of revenue for the city, she said. Security is needed because they are inviting a lot of people into the city.

She said there will have to be so much more planning for future budgets and there may be someone in Belleville who can help – a specific person from the community who can help with the fine lines. She said Councilman Fielder had suggested someone.

Fielder said he doesn't remember suggesting a person, and he thought it was Growth Works he suggested.

Chapman said it was a while back and Fielder said he would talk to her about it later.

"We have three weeks to determine the best fit," she said of the marijuana industry applications. "All applications came in differently. There were a lot of nuances. A part-time temporary person could help us zip through everything. And, also in the future would be helpful."

Fielder said the responsibility of day-to-day reporting to businesses and the state, "That's a full-time job for someone."

City Manager Tracey Schultz Kobylarz said while she and Chapman are doing the paperwork, after businesses are selected there will be a huge impact on the building department, with new buildings going up. It will be a big impact on Rick Rutherford, building official, and his DPW department.

This will take a lot of attention for the first full year, she said. She said they are trying to do everything to the best of their ability to avoid litigation. And there will be business licenses for all businesses.

"We're being very, very cautious to take baby steps," City Manager Kobylarz said, referring to the marijuana rules.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesse Marcotte said he would suggested basic training for the planning commission and the board of zoning appeals to make sure everything is consistent.

"Very good. Consistency is the key," Clerk Chapman agreed. She said in Michigan this is unchartered territory as to what works and what does not and they have to find as much information as possible.

Hillside Cemetery

Chapman then went on to Hillside Cemetery issues. She said municipal cemeteries usually are pretty manageable with not a lot of activity.

But, in light of COVID and the natural circle of life, activity at Hillside has picked up and there are one or two burials a week. She said everyone is looking for space and it takes a lot of time.

She said currently the cemetery does not sustain itself and she would like to propose price changes at a later date.

In closing, she said her goal is to improve technology, improve safety in the workplace, and improve customer service, so people have a positive customer experience at city hall.

Upcoming Meetings

- Thursday, Jan. 14 – Keystone Academy School Board, 6 p.m. Also, Sumpter Township Planning Commission, 7 p.m. Also, Belleville Planning Commission, 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, Jan. 19 – Van Buren Township work study session at 4 p.m. and regular meeting at 6 p.m.
- Monday, Jan. 25 – Belleville City Council, 7:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Jan. 26 – Sumpter Township workshop and regular meeting at 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 27 – Van Buren Township Planning Commission, 7:30 p.m.
- Monday, Feb. 1 – Van Buren Township work/study session at 4 p.m. Also, Belleville City Council, 7:30 p.m.

VBT Board of Zoning Appeals meets briefly in Zoom session

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

In a half-hour Zoom session on Dec. 8, the Van Buren Township Board of Zoning Appeals met to set its meetings for the year. There was no other business on the agenda after another item was removed.

The meetings are set for 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month, if needed. The last meeting of the BZA before the December meeting, had been Aug. 11.

Dan Power, director of planning and economic development, gave an overview of 2020 said there had been fewer activities for BZA review and it has met infrequently. He said there were three variance requests from two people and one more that had been withdrawn.

The election of officers for 2021 had been on the Dec. 8 agenda, but it was removed when Power said the election should be pushed to the next meeting, in 2021.

Power said there is an obligation as BZA members for individuals to attend a minimum of four hours of training each year. He said there had been limited training available this year because of COVID-19.

BZA member John Haase asked if there is the opportunity for distance training and Power said there are virtual workshops they can attend and he will alert them to opportunities next year.

BZA member John Herman asked for an update on the senior housing on Belleville Road. He asked if it was a dead issue because the BZA turned down its request for a façade that didn't meet the overlay district ordinance.

"I'd hate to see it die," Herman said, adding, "It is needed."

Power said that is another item that has been put on a temporary pause. He said besides the façade, there is an issue with floor area in the units. He said the project was tabled by the planning commission in September so that issue could be addressed.

"I'd hate to see us kill this project," Herman said.

Power said that's not the BZA's job.

Power thanked former BZA member Don Boynton, who was invited to the Zoom meeting to say goodbye. As a newly elected township trustee, he no longer has a seat on the BZA.

The Jan. 12 meeting of the BZA was canceled.

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Michelle Nguyen inducted into Phi Kappa Phi honor society

Michelle Nguyen of Belleville was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest all-discipline collegiate honor society.

Nguyen was initiated at Eastern Michigan University.

Nguyen is among approximately 30,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter.

Only the top 10% of seniors and 7.5% of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10% of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

Isaac Jackson name to Alma College Fall 2020 Dean's List

Alma College has released the Dean's List for those students who achieved outstanding academic performance during the 2020 Fall Term.

Students, including Isaac Jackson of Belleville, who achieved a 3.5 or better grade point average during a term, while carrying a minimum of 13 credits, at least eight of which are evaluative grades, are named to the Dean's List.

Alma College, founded in 1886, is a four-year residential liberal arts college located in the heart of Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

PUBLISHER'S NOTICE:

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Fair Housing Act which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status or national origin, or an intention, to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination." Familial status includes children under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians, pregnant women and people securing custody of children under 18.

This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain of discrimination call HUD toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. The toll-free telephone number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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2002 FORD ECONOLINE E150 CARGO VAN. 146K miles, a little rusty but runs great. $2,500 firm. (734) 516-8197 call or text. 01/21

2014 JEEP PATRIOT. California Car, 4-cyl., 5-speed, 2-wheel drive. Sorry, no air. Immaculate inside & out. New tires. Private owner. $4,950. (734) 695-0819 01/21

2005 BLACK JEEP LIBERTY. 6-cyl, auto, 4-wheel drive, very clean inside & out. Private owner. $2,150. (734) 695-0819 01/21

2004 IMPALA. 4-door, air, 6-cyl, low miles, loaded, Carfax, private owner. $3,650 OBO. (734) 695-0819 01/21

2009 CHEVY IMPALA. 4-door, full power, air, 4-cyl, very clean, average mileage. $3,150. Private Owner. (734) 695-0819 01/21

1995 THUNDERBIRD CLASSIC. Very nice inside & out. Private owner. $3,450. (734) 695-0819 01/28

2000 LINCOLN CONTINENTAL. Full power & air. Must See! Private owner. $3,150. (734) 695-0819 01/28

MANUFACTURED HOMES FOR SALE

NEW & USED HOMES in Belleville/Canton area. Family Communities: Holiday West (734) 461-9797 & Holiday Estates (734) 495-0500. Senior Community: Royal Holiday (734) 455-2666 01/21

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3-ROOM OFFICE SPACE on Main Street. Call (734) 355-5464 01/14

"He who is without a newspaper is cut off from his species."
– P.T. Barnum

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CASH PAID FOR Sports Cards and Comic Books. 50s, 60s, 70s. Private collector can come to you when it is safe to do so. (734) 697-3546. 01/14

TOP DOLLAR PAID FOR VEHICLES in good condition. Don't trade it, sell it to me. (734) 695-0819 01/28

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Notice to Advertisers:

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Belleville PD

(continued from page 1)

Terry Carroll, Wayne County Director of Community Development. Carroll, who was present by Zoom, said the city approved the paperwork in October, the same paperwork approved since 2014, and then in December HUD said it never should have been approved. There now is new wording, approved by HUD lawyers, he said. It has to be back to HUD by Jan. 28. He said Belleville got CDBG funds for its kayak launch and senior citizen services. Carroll apologized for the mixup, but, "You can't argue with city hall." He said all 34 communities have to approve the new wording, but Belleville was the only one that invited him to its meeting to explain. He said the change is that the city can't sell unused CDBG funds to another community and another small item he can't remember. "We're a little disappointed in HUD," he said;

• Removed from the agenda approval of Property Poverty Tax Exemptions at the request of Jennifer Stamper of WCA because she has been alerted recent changes in the state law may affect this;

• Approved compensation change for the city's only part time police officer to $20.49 per hour, up from $17.94, as recommended by Interim City Manager Tracey Schultz Kobylarz. She said there is zero difference between what a full-time officer and a part-time officer do, but the part-time is paid less per hour. She said they don't know how that happened. This will be added to the POAM/BPOA collective bargaining agreement. "The risk is the same for part-time and full-time," said Councilman Voigt. "When you go out on the street, you have a target on your back";

• Approved accounts payable of $84,938.70 and the following purchases in excess of $500: to Superior Township Fire Dept., $1,095 for 10% matching for a FEMA Grant for nozzles; to Staples, $725.54 for election supplies; and to Morton Salt, $3,238.27 for road maintenance, from DPW budget;

• Heard City Manager Kobylarz give a description of the LakeFest being planned for June 25-27. She said there will not be a carnival associated with LakeFest and participants will be only non-profit organizations and businesses located in the 48111 zip code. She said it will be necessary for the city to determine which licenses and permits will be required by participants and organizers. Activities so far include Dragon Boat Racing, Kids' Zone, food trucks, two music zones, car show and art show;

• Heard Kobylarz say on Jan. 8, Belleville had a spike of 21 positive COVID cases on the same day. She said the city is looking into this. She said the city may be hosting numbers for all three communities;

• Heard Kobylarz say when the city changed to bi-monthly water billing in April, it changed the billing cycle, but not everything. People were billed on Monday for a bill due on Friday. She said they have had so many requests of late to waive late fees that they just learned about the issue and are dealing with it;

• Sang "Happy Birthday" to Clerk/Treasurer Verna Chapman whose birthday was Jan. 10;

• Heard Councilwoman Kelly Bates say the city earned $1,000 for Veterans Memorial maintenance with the recent veteran banner project. The banners carrying Civil War veterans are being donated to the Belleville Area Museum; and

• Heard Chief Robinson say the previous night, between 4 and 5 a.m., several cars in the city were gone through and items taken. He asked residents to please lock their car doors. He said all the cars involved were unlocked. Mayor Kerreen Conley said when her car was entered all they took was her garage door opener, which, she said, is the key to your house.

Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

POLICE VEHICLE AUCTION

On January 27th, 2021, the Van Buren Township Police Department will conduct a public auction of impounded and abandoned vehicles. The auction will begin at 10:30am, at **J&T Towing** and Storage, 287 Industrial Dr. Belleville MI, County of Wayne, where the following will be offered for sale to the highest bidder.

1988	KAWASAKI	MC	JKAENGA19JA032104	20-15176
2004	FORD	4D	1FAFP53UX4G122076	20-16111
2000	HYUNDAI	2D	KMHCF35G3YU026840	20-16111
1999	TOYOTA	SW	4T1BF18B2XU300964	20-16159
2010	FORD	D4	3FAHP0HG4AR415944	20-16210
2005	CHEVROLET	4D	2G1WF52E159384679	20-16515

At 11:30am, the auction will move to **Great Lakes Towing** and storage, 42350 Van Born Rd. Belleville MI, County of Wayne, where the following vehicles, are offered for sale to the highest bidder.

2007	DODGE	SW	2D4FV47T37H641543	20-8492
2004	CHEVROLET	SW	1GNDT13SX42147729	20-8493
2006	MERCURY	4D	3MEHM08156R661289	20-11975
2002	CHEVROLET	2D	1G1JC124627256325	20-12335
2011	JEEP	SW	1J4NF5FB5BD154476	20-13120
2003	VOLKSWAGE	4D	WVWPD63B93P054895	20-13120
2005	CHRYSLER	4D	2C3JA63H55H511331	20-13120
2002	DODGE	4D	1B3EL46R72N202917	20-13120
2006	BMW	4D	5UXFA13576LY35295	20-13120
2009	DODGE	2D	2B3LJ54T99H601669	20-13120
2000	DODGE	4D	1B3ES46CXYD831164	20-13590
2002	PONTIAC	4D	1G2WK52J12F159556	20-15172
2002	CHRYSLER	SW	3C8FY68B22T276986	20-15210
2012	FORD	4D	1FAHP3F20CL242837	20-15562
2003	BUICK	4D	3G5DA03E13S608829	20-15828
2006	CHRYSLER	SW	3A4FY48B06T248447	20-15919
2013	CHEVROLET	2D	1G1PA5SH9D7294287	20-15963
2006	FORD	4D	1FAFP34N56W106629	20-15963
2004	FORD	4D	1FAFP56S74A129127	20-16141
2012	BUICK	4D	2G4GT5GV2C9213414	20-16173
2006	BUICK	SW	3G5DA03L86S576996	20-16239
2007	PONTIAC	4D	2G2WP552771204729	20-16611

All vehicles are sold in "as is condition." Bidding on all impounded vehicles will start at the amount due for towing and storage. Vehicles may be deleted from this list at any time prior to the start of the auction.

Leon Wright MMC, CMMC., Van Buren Township Clerk,
Published: January 14th, 2021

Van Buren Public Schools Public Notice

Attention Parents/Guardians and Former Students:

The Van Buren Public School District has determined that certain special education records that contain personal identifiable information about former students are no longer needed to provide educational services to those students. Specifically, the District no longer has a need to maintain certain special education records for students who graduated or dropped out of school prior to June 16, 1995.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, parents or adult former students may request the District destroy personally identifiable information when a school district no longer needs that information to provide educational services to the student. Under the Family Educational Right & Privacy Act, parents and adult former students have the right to inspect and review educational records. These records may be useful for purposes of college admissions or for obtaining public assistance benefits.

If a parent or adult former student would to inspect and review records, they may set an appointment to do so on or before February 1, 2021 by contacting

Angela Mercer
Email: amercer@vanburenschools.net
Phone: (734)697-1009

Please note that after February 1, 2021, unless the District has received a request to inspect and review records, it will destroy any or all special education records of students who either graduated or dropped out prior to June 14, 1995 as permitted by state and federal law. For more information email amercer@vanburenschools.net .

Karen Johnston
Director Student Services
karenjohnston@vanburenschools.net

Things to do in the Belleville area...

• **Tuesday, Jan. 19 –** Forgotten Harvest Free Food Give Away runs from 2 to 4:30 p.m., or while supplies last, every Tuesday at Van Buren Township Hall, 46425 Tyler Rd. Volunteers will load fresh groceries into the vehicle of anyone in need.

• **Tuesday, Jan. 19 –** Forgotten Harvest Food Give Away at noon every Tuesday until further notice at Romulus High School, 9650 S. Wayne Rd. Sponsored by Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans and hosted by Romulus Community School District. Information: Virginia Williams, (734) 673-8396

• **Sunday, Feb. 7 –** Bugles Across America at 7:15 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial on High Street in Belleville. Brief ceremony monthly to honor veterans in service, retired, and passed on. "Taps" is played and "National Anthem" sung.

"Democracy is worth dying for, because it's the most deeply honorable form of government ever devised by man."
– Ronald Reagan

Van Buren Township Police Dispatch Log

There were 144 dispatch calls reported by Van Buren Township police for last week, including the following.

Sunday, Jan. 3:
0031 – suspicious person/vehicle, Denton Rd.
0112 – suspicious person/vehicle, Sumpter/Hull
0306 – disorderly, N. I-94 Service Dr.
0522 – family trouble, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0557 – disorderly, S. I-94 Service Dr.
0820 – welfare check, Oak Ln.
1124 – disorderly, E. Huron River Dr.
1416 – welfare check, Van Buren St.
1615 – vehicle lockout, Belleville Rd./N. I-94 Service Dr.
1631 – civil matter, Park Estates Dr.
1640 – civil matter, Lenmoore Ave.
1655 – larceny from auto, Denton Rd.
1758 – private property impound, Belleville Rd.
2123 – assist other dept., W. Huron River Dr./Elwell Rd.
2125 – property damage accident, Hoeft Rd./Hull
2304 – suspicious person/vehicle, Tyler Rd.

Monday, Jan. 4:
0221 – suspicious person/vehicle, Tyler Rd./Andover Dr.
0233 – suspicious person/vehicle, N. I-94 Service
0309 – motorist assist, Belleville Rd.
0423 – intrusion alarm, Haggerty Rd.
0905 – civil matter, N. Ponderosa Trl.
0924 – larceny, Westlake Cir.
1142 – suicidal person, Belleville Rd.
1931 – harassment call, Meadows Cir.
1942 – civil matter, Parkwood Dr.
2158 – road hazard, Rawsonville Rd./Grove

Tuesday, Jan. 5:
0309 – intrusion alarm, Samuel Barton Dr.
0337 – traffic offense, Park Estates Dr.
0431 – 911 welfare check, Cobblestone Ct.
0722 – welfare check, Edwards Rd.
1020 – larceny, Ecorse Rd.
1021 – welfare check, E. Adams
1049 – larceny, Denton Rd.
1109 – juvenile complaint, Madison Dr.
1232 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
1527 – assist other dept., Maple Dr.
1554 – larceny, Westlake Cir.
1607 – suspicious person/vehicle, Belleville Rd.
2029 – suspicious person/vehicle, Cranberry
2249 – suspicious person/vehicle, S. I-94 Service

Wednesday, Jan. 6:
0907 – intrusion alarm, Salem Ct.
0912 – vehicle lockout, Ecorse Rd.
0922 – found property/child, Tyler Rd.
0935 – parking complaint, Hamilton St.
1005 – found property/child, Samantha/Jeremy
1038 – parking complaint, Van Buren St.
1049 – private property impound, Van Born
1114 – assault & battery, Tyler Rd.
1140 – animal complaint, Ecorse Rd.
1218 – welfare check, Haggerty Rd.
1219 – fraud, Belleville Rd.
1234 – fraud, Michigan Canton Walmart Ave.
1248 – private property impound, Denton Rd.
1314 – juvenile complaint, McBride
1341 – intrusion alarm, Morton Taylor Rd.
1404 – leaving the scene of a property damage accident, Rawsonville Rd.
1415 – trespassing, Rawsonville Rd.
1422 – traffic stop, E. Huron River Dr. / Edison Lake Rd.
1531 – assist fire dept., Harbour Pointe Ct.
1710 – assist citizen, S. I-94 Service Dr.
1751 – civil matter, Kirkridge Park Dr.
2054 – suspicious person/vehicle, Victoria St.
2206 – unauthorized driving away of auto, Westlake Cir.
2232 – disorderly, N. I-94 Service Dr.
2341 – domestic, S. Ponderosa Trl.

Thursday, Jan. 7:
0053 – suspicious person/vehicle, Westlake Cir.
0126 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
0151 – suspicious person/vehicle, Light House Dr.
0321 – assist fire dept., Haggerty Rd.
0324 – intrusion alarm, Ricardo Dr.
0835 – private property impound, Belleville Rd.
1028 – found property/child, Tyler Rd.
1208 – larceny from auto, Hamilton Ct.
1220 – property damage accident, Belleville/Aldi
1309 – private property impound, S. I-94 Service
1345 – juvenile complaint, Savage Rd.
1434 – vehicle lock out, Belleville Rd.
1445 – fraud, Bayshore Dr.
1522 – suspicious person/vehicle, Berkdale Dr.
1625 – suspicious person/vehicle, Belleville Rd.
1643 – larceny, Maple Dr.
1914 – motorist assist, Rawsonville Rd./Martz Rd.
1930 – civil matter, S. I-94 Service Dr.
2042 – family trouble, Quirk Rd.
2221 – mental subject, Landmark

Friday, Jan. 8:
0005 – threat, Oak Ln.
0047 – disorderly, Belleville Rd.
0512 – suicidal person, McBride Ave.
0725 – property damage accident, Bemis Rd./Lohr
0815 – assist citizen, Ecorse Rd./Hannan Rd.
1249 – threat, Capitol Dr.
1301 – domestic, Quirk Rd.
1455 – suspicious person/vehicle, Belleville Rd.
1529 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd.
1548 – missing person, Parkwood Dr.
1603 – domestic, Denton Rd.
1614 – assist other dept., E. I-94/Belleville Rd.
1616 – civil matter, Tyler Rd.
1619 – road hazard, N. I-94 Service Dr./Belleville
1624 – threat, Anna Dr.
1711 – civil matter, Sheldon Rd.
1759 – property damage accident, Belleville Rd. / Ecorse Rd.
1830 – property damage accident, W. Huron River Dr. / Rawsonville Rd.
1854 – retail fraud, Rawsonville Rd.
1934 – domestic, Outer Dr.
1938 – civil matter, Belleville Rd.
2317 – domestic, N. I-94 Service Dr.
2337 – 911 welfare check, Edwards Rd.

Saturday, Jan. 9:
0129 – suspicious person/vehicle, Dalton Dr.
0222 – suspicious person/vehicle, Revere Dr.
0233 – domestic, N. I-94 Service Dr.
0504 – road hazard, Belleville Rd./Ecorse Rd.
0616 – intrusion alarm, Ecorse Rd.
0617 – 911 welfare check, Sandlewood Dr.
0833 – civil matter, Kirkridge Park Dr.
1201 – abandoned auto, Belleville Rd.
1208 – larceny from auto, Revere Dr.
1210 – assist other dept., S. I-94 Service Dr.
1227 – larceny from auto, Revere Dr.
1233 – larceny from auto, Revere Dr.
1302 – welfare check, Denton Rd.
1435 – lost property/child, Belleville Rd.
1443 – abandoned auto, Andover Dr./Stratford Dr.
1521 – larceny from auto, Revere Dr.
1706 – traffic offense, Belleville Rd.
1854 – intrusion alarm, Rawsonville Rd.
2114 – intrusion alarm, Ironwood Dr.
2117 – intrusion alarm, Belleville Rd.
2200 – road hazard, Belleville Rd./N. I-94 Service
2249 – noise complaint, Ecorse Service B Dr.

There was one traffic stop on the log this week.

Belleville Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Jan. 3:
1635 – assist fire dept., Edison Ave.
2119 – traffic stop, Second St./Main St.

Monday, Jan. 4:
0014 – traffic stop, E. Huron River Dr./Loza Ln.
0046 – traffic stop, Five Points
0153 – traffic stop, Main St./N. Liberty St.
1436 – misc. complaint, N. Aberdeen Ct.
1454 – neighbor trouble, Menlo Park Dr.
2101 – welfare check, N. Liberty St.

Tuesday, Jan. 5:
0317 – traffic stop, Main St./Third St.
1004 – suspicious person/vehicle, Owen St.
2132 – traffic stop, E. Huron River Dr./Loza Ln.

Wednesday, Jan. 6:
0003 – welfare check, Loza Ln.
0128 – traffic stop, Fifth St./Main St.
0845 – breaking & entering, Loza Ln.
1030 – welfare check, Carmell
1501 – welfare check, Main St.
1624 – assist fire dept., W. Columbia Ave.
1731 – fraud, Victorian Ln.
2215 – unauthorized driving away of auto, E. Thornhill Ct.
2322 – suspicious person/vehicle, Main St./High

Thursday, Jan. 7:
0819 – misc. complaint, N. Biggs Ave.
1345 – traffic stop, Savage Rd./Victorian Ln.
1707 – fraud, Main St.
2021 – threat, Carmell

Friday, Jan. 8:
0106 – mental subject, Belle Villa Blvd.
1131 – noise complaint, E. Huron River Dr.
1207 – suspicious person/vehicle, W. Columbia
1836 – fraud, Carmell
2106 – traffic stop, E. Huron River Dr./Wexford
2204 – welfare check, Loza Ln.

Saturday, Jan. 9:
0143 – traffic stop, Savage Rd./Victorian Ln.
0803 – traffic stop, W. Columbia Ave.
0827 – traffic stop, Main St./Third St.
0935 – traffic stop, High St.
1203 – traffic stop, Main St./High St.
1212 – traffic stop, High St.
1232 – traffic stop, Main St./High St.
1316 – traffic stop, Main St.
1334 – breaking & entering, E. Huron River Dr.
1739 – domestic, Brain St.
1940 – fireworks, N. Liberty St.
2358 – traffic stop, Main St./Third St.

There were 18 traffic stops on this week's log.

Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

Sunday, Jan. 3:
0547 – fire dept. assist, 26000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1201 – follow-up investigation, 44000 bl. Willow
1206 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1215 – follow-up investigation, 45000 bl. Willow
1233 – assist other agency, 21000 bl. Karr Rd.
1436 – alarm, 48000 bl. Willow Rd.
1930 – traffic stop, Oakville Waltz/Sherwood
2252 – mental health call, Rustic Ln.

Monday, Jan. 4:
0603 – alarm, 8300 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
0926 – fire dept. assist, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
0951 – family trouble, 51000 bl. Willis Rd.
1359 – identity theft complaint, 48000 bl. Willis
1439 – suspicious person, Willis Rd./Sherwood Rd.
1517 – larceny, 18000 bl. Lohr Rd.
1548 – assist other agency, Martinsville Rd./Judd
1651 – warrant arrest, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1846 – misc. detail, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
2000 – fire dept. assist, 21000 bl. Elwell Rd.
2123 – suspicious circumstances, 24000 bl. Sumpter Rd.

Tuesday, Jan. 5:
0230 – traffic stop, Rawsonville Rd./Bemis Rd.
1457 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Fenster Rd.
1745 – misc. detail, out of township
1750 – traffic stop, Willis Rd./Wilmot Rd.
1923 – misc. detail, out of township
2115 – 911 hang up, 44000 bl. Wear Rd.
2122 – assist other agency, Rustic Ln.
2156 – fire dept. assist, 20000 bl. Karr Rd.
2258 – suspicious circumstances, 6700 bl. Oakville Waltz Rd.

Wednesday, Jan. 6:
0009 – civil matter, 43000 bl. Harris Rd.
0026 – mental health call, 20000 bl. Karr Rd.
0303 – mental health call, Rustic Ln.
0546 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Fenster Rd.
0734 – property damage accident, Willis Rd. / Rawsonville Rd.
1139 – fire dept. assist, Carriage Ln.
1216 – fire dept. assist, 29000 bl. Elwell Rd.
1335 – traffic stop, Willis Rd./Rawsonville Rd.
1351 – suspicious circumstances, 20000 bl. Karr
1434 – animal complaint, 46000 bl. Thatcham Ln.
1904 – fire dept. assist, 48000 bl. Harris Rd.
1951 – fire dept. assist, Wayside Dr.
2021 – misc. detail, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
2140 – suspicious circumstances, 8100 bl. Rawsonville Rd.

Thursday, Jan. 7:
0555 – traffic stop, Rawsonville Rd./Bemis Rd.
0820 – traffic stop, Willis Rd./Rawsonville Rd.
0859 – misc. detail, 46000 bl. Willow Rd.
1220 – citizen assist, Mulberry Ln.
1257 – assist other agency, 44000 bl. Paris Dr.
1659 – family trouble, 43000 bl. Dunn Rd.
1811 – misc. detail, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1921 – family trouble, 43000 bl. Dunn Rd.
2131 – suspicious person, Rawsonville/Willis

Friday, Jan. 8:
0719 – traffic complaint, Bemis Rd./Lohr Rd.
0829 – fire dept. assist, Sumpter Rd./Judd Rd.
0913 – fire dept. assist, 21000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
0947 – welfare check, 43000 bl. Harris Rd.
1109 – animal complaint, 47000 bl. Harris Rd.
1216 – unauthorized driving away of auto, Carriage Ln.
1436 – suspicious circumstances, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1509 – follow-up investigation, Edgewood Dr.
1851 – misc. detail, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1856 – fire dept. assist, 22000 bl. Karr Rd.
1911 – traffic stop, Judd Rd./Rawsonville Rd.
1918 – fire dept. assist, 13000 bl. Rawsonville Rd.
1931 – suspicious circumstances, 22000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
2045 – noise complaint, Elwell Rd./Willis Rd.

Saturday, Jan. 9:
0314 – fire dept. assist, Carriage Ln.
1237 – mental health call, 25000 bl. Elwell Rd.
1803 – animal complaint, 43000 bl. Dunn Rd.
1847 – misc. detail, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1922 – suspicious vehicle, Rustic Ln.
1953 – property damage accident, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
2016 – fire dept. assist, New Mexico St.

Also on this week's log were 116 patrol checks. Traffic stops totaled seven.

Rep. Bellino finishes 2019-20 term with perfect voting record

State Rep. Joe Bellino, R-Monroe, has completed his second term as state representative with a perfect voting record, casting a vote on all 1,027 recorded roll call votes between January 2019 and December 2020.

An analysis published by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy indicates Bellino was one of 51 state representatives in the 110-member House who maintained a perfect record throughout the entire term.

He represents Sumpter Township among other communities in District 17. He was reelected in November for two more years and because of term limits this is his last term.

Rep. Kristy Pagan, D-Canton, missed 301 votes of the 1,027 recorded roll call votes between January 2019 and December 2020. Rep. Pagan represented Belleville and most of Van Buren Township in District 21 and could not run again in November because of term limits.

Rep. Ranjeev Puri, D-Canton, has been sworn in as the new representative in District 21.

Rep. Alex Garza, D-Taylor, missed 23 of the 1,027 roll call votes. He represents District 12, which covers a portion of Van Buren Township.

Senator Erika Geiss, D-Taylor, missed 26 of the 1,002 roll call votes in the Senate since Jan. 1, 2019. She represents Belleville, Van Buren and Sumpter in District 6.

Sgt. James McCall to serve as Reserve recruiter in Illinois

Army Sgt. 1st Class James McCall has arrived for duty as a Reserve recruiter with the Central Illinois Recruiting Company, Indianapolis Army Recruiting Battalion, Illinois. Before Illinois, he was a recruiter in Louisiana, North Carolina, and Iowa. He has earned three Army commendation medals and six Army achievement medals. He is a 1993 graduate of Belleville High School, Belleville, MI.

VBT Clerk's Coats for Kids program gives coats, toys to families

The Van Buren Township Clerk's office hosted a free Toy Giveaway on Dec. 17 in front of Township Hall at 46425 Tyler Road. The toys were geared towards children ages 2-8.

"We passed out new toys to as many Van Buren Township families as we could," said Van Buren Township Clerk Leon Wright. "I want to thank Sovereign Partners for their toy donation and all of our sponsors who donated to this year's Coats for Kids."

With generous donations from local businesses the 2020 Coats for Kids program raised $4,000 and would like to thank its sponsors:

- US Ecology
- Gasiorek, Morgan, Greco, McCauley & Kotzian P.C.
- Waste Management
- Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amtsbuechler
- Wade Trim
- McKenna & Associates
- Fishbeck, Thompson Carr & Huber
- Belleville Main LLC

Due to COVID-19, instead of dropping off coats to area schools, the clerk's office adopted 15 local Van Buren Public School families and gave each family a $250 gift card to Meijer, plus new coats and toys for the children. For more information about the Coats for Kids program contact the clerk's office at (734) 699-8909.

Read The Newspaper On The Web!
The Belleville-Area Independent Website is Online! Visit us @ bellevilleareaindependent.com

Photo courtesy of Jeffrey Riggs

DTE tree trimming by a contractor was observed Monday at Potter Drive in the City of Belleville as DTE worked to cut back on the power outages that have plagued that part of the city for years. Jeffrey Riggs said, "You wouldn't believe how much gasoline I've gone through in my generator powering my home and the neighbors' homes during the power outages in the past year." He said DTE worked all day trimming trees to protect the 13.8KV top lines and the 7.5KV lower three lines to help prevent future outages due to trees and wind.

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Nature's Palette of Colors Enhances this Impressive, Updated and Upgraded 3 Bedroom, 2 1/2 Bath Country Home on Approximately 4 Acres. Newer Premium Kitchen with Granite Counter Tops and Recessed Lighting, Newer Furnace and Central Air, Wood Flooring and Two Skylights. This Well Designed Open Floor Plan offers Yard Views from Every Window. 2 1/2 Car Attached Garage, Large Wraparound Deck and Horse Barn to Finish. On Paved Street. $304,900

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1033 E HURON RIVER, VAN BUREN
BRICK LAKEFRONT HOME. 3 Bedrooms, 1 1/2 Baths, New Custom Wolf Kitchen, New Custom Bath, Gas Fireplace, Hardwood Floors, Large Basement and New Roof 2013. 2 1/2 Garage, Dock, Decking on More than 1 Acre. $369,900

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43593 BEMIS, SUMPTER TOWNSHIP
GIANT SIZE - EXTRA LARGE 3,900 Square Foot Feature Rich Brick Home with Large Cooks Kitchen, Living Room with Fireplace, Massive Open Lighted Family Room adjacent to a Big Indoor Pool Area with Cedar Surround Walls and Shower. Upgraded to Premium Metal Roof on 2 1/2 Acres with Large Workshop Barn that Includes Power, Heat and Upper Storage Area on Paved Street - Home needs updating and Sold 'As Is' $300,000

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500E HURON RIVER DR, BELLEVILLE
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PRIME LOCATION

41405 TYLER, VAN BUREN
PRIME LOCATION. Corner of Haggerty and Tyler. Opportunity Awaits - 3 Bedroom, 1 Bath Home. Large Lot with Larger 2 1/2 Car Detached Garage. New Carpet, New Bath, New Paint $155,000

GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD

324 CHERRY, WYANDOTTE
A Preferred Location 2 Bedroom 1 Bath Home near Everything. Full Basement with Newer 90+ Furnace and Newer High Efficient Water Heater. Purchaser responsible for certificate of occupancy and home sold in as is condition. $109,900

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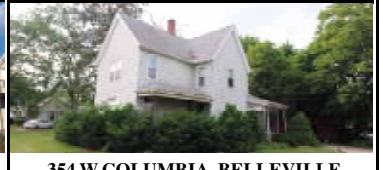

354 W COLUMBIA, BELLEVILLE
TWO LOTS - MULTIPLE FAMILY ZONING One of the Largest Parcels to be developed in The City of Belleville. .9 Acres with 197 Foot Frontage There is a Home and Barn that could be renovated. Sold as is $100,000 Cash or Offer

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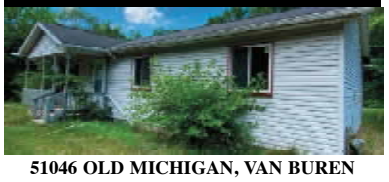

51046 OLD MICHIGAN, VAN BUREN
A MOST AFFORDABLE 3 Bedroom 1 1/2 Bath Ranch. Newer Windows, Doors, Newer Furnace and Central Air. Over 1/2 Acre. More than 1,300 Square Feet. No VA or FHA Offers and Exclude all Appliances and Dishwasher. $119,900

THREE PARCELS A MOST BEAUTIFUL PROPERTY 20+ ACRES WEAR RD	$175,000
TORREY 2.48 AC PERC & SURV	$39,000
VACANT RAWSONVILLE 2.6 AC	$95,000
JUDD 10 ACRES SUMPTER TWP	$80,000
00000 SUMPTER 243X687 3.63 AC	$40,000

COMMERCIAL CORNER OF ECORSE & WAYNE ROMULUS 4.27ACRES	$350,000
WAYNE RD COM ZONE 1.48 AC	$149,000
SAVAGE 1 ACRE SUMPTER TWP	$45,000
25817 SUMPTER 80X529 .97 AC	$20,000
WILLIS SUMPTER 1.14 ACRES	$45,000

THREE 12+ ACRE PARCELS AT EACH CORNER WEAR AND HAGGERTY	$120,000
VACANT LOUISA "DREAM LOT"	$70,000
GRANT ROMULUS 1.8 ACRES LT IN	$65,000
HAGGERTY 1.5 AC VAN BUREN	$70,000
10 AC BUNTON YPSILANTI TWP	$155,000

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KARR RD 20 ACRES ZONED AG	$200,000

HURON TWP VAC CLARK 1.12 AC	$50,000
HURON TWP VAC CLARK .74 ACRES	$40,000
HURON TWP VAC OTTER 2.94 ACRES	$60,000
HURON TWP VAC ASH .87 ACRES	$55,000
HURON TWP VAC ASH .87 ACRES	$55,000
41530 SAVAGE 30 AC VAN BUREN	$349,999

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